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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Middle East Iran European

Issues: Turkey

PARIS - Friday, October 07, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Middle East
Iran
European Issues: Turkey

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

Prime Minister Villepin was the guest of a two-hour television talk show last evening. His performance is today's major front-page story. Popular Le Parisien calls him a "Charmer" while Le Figaro headlines "Villepin Defends His Choices." Liberation devotes its editorial to his Gaullist political line. The subject of illegal immigration makes today's front page in Liberation while Le Figaro speaks of "the Challenge of Immigration" in its editorial, just as Interior Minister Sarkozy warps up a one-day trip to Libya to contain African immigration to Europe.

The economic and financial press report on the launching of the A350, "without European subsidies." EADS co-President Thomas Enders is interviewed in Les Echos: "The question here for Airbus is to fight with equal weapons with Boeing. If the EU and the U.S. want to define new rules, fine. But as long as there is no new system, we must take into account the fact that Boeing receives public and indirect subsidies. I have never understood why the reimbursable advances, with interest, from our governments are criticized more than Boeing's subsidies. We want to avoid a lengthy procedure before the WTO. Our gesture confirms our desire to find a solution to the conflict through negotiations. And we expect Boeing to adopt a conciliatory initiative. It is neither in our interest nor in the interest of Boeing to launch a trade war. We want equal rules of competition."

Liberation reports on the proposed Bill against torturing prisoners "ardently defended by Senator McCain. A challenge to the White House, which is threatening to veto the Bill. But few have taken the threat seriously: opposing one's veto to a text that prohibits torture would not go down well."

The publication in France of a book by former U.S. soldier Jimmy Massey titled "Kill, Kill, Kill" which was announced yesterday in communist l'Humanite is front-paged in popular right-of-center France Soir: "We Are Murdering Civilians" Massey is quoted. Inside, a two-page spread reports on Massey's experience and interviews the former Marine: "The difference between Lynndie England and us, is that she was caught."

The EU-Turkey negotiations elicit a harsh commentary from columnist Ivan Rioufol. In other international news, the role of Iran to destabilize Iraq is reported in Le Figaro while La Croix reports on King Abdallah of Jordan's role in bringing together Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas.

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Middle East

"Abdallah of Jordan, Mediator of Peace"
Agnes Rotivel in Catholic La Croix (10/07): "Mandated by the Americans, Abdallah of Jordan can be proud of having brought together two men who were no longer speaking to each other. The meeting between Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas is scheduled for October 11. King Abdallah is naturally following in his father's footsteps. President Bush, who wants to get Arab leaders more involved in resolving their region's conflicts, wants to believe that by sending King Abdallah as his messenger, the message has a better chance of being heard than if it comes directly from the Bush administration. Especially considering the atmosphere of mistrust that prevails in the Arab world about Washington-led initiatives."

Iran

"London Denounces Iran's Interference in Iraq"

Georges Malbrunot in right-of-center Le Figaro (10/07): "After the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, it is London's turn to accuse Iran of helping the Iraqi rebellion. It is not in Iran's interest to see the Americans succeeding in Iraq. The emergence of a Shiite democracy in Iraq could indeed weaken the Iranian Mullahs. Since the beginning of the summer, a new piece of the puzzle has emerged, with Iran helping Sunni armed groups. Iran does not want to put all of its eggs in the same basket: helping the pro-American Shiite leaders in Baghdad does not preclude logistical aid to the anti-American Shiite militia."

European Issues: Turkey

"Turkey in Europe: the Price to Pay for Contempt"
Ivan Rioufol in right-of-center Le Figaro (10/07): "To a large majority, the people of Europe have said no to Turkey. This is why the betrothal with Ankara imposed by the EU-25 is an insult to democracy. The EU is courting its own death when it does not listen to its people or accept to analyze their reactions to globalization. Once again the EU leaders' angelic stance is clashing with the people's clairvoyance. By inviting Turkey to join in this European profit-based economic club, the elites hope to keep at bay the clash between civilizations. But who says that Turkey's 90 percent Muslim population is ready to give up its identity? Austria tried by itself to be the European people's advocate. No country came to its rescue: Austria had to capitulate in the face of an imperial Turkey aided by the U.S. . It is highly improbable that Europe will be able to impose its values on Turkey. And who can guarantee that 'European' Turkey will give up its so-called moderate 'Islamism?' There is a fascination among European leaders with Islam and its proselytism. The price to pay will be a 'Balkanization' of Europe." STAPLETON